

WORD RINGS FROM REARRANGED ALPHABETS

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On page wu (wort-uiteinden) of *Opperlans! taal- & letterkunde* (Querido, 2003), Battus (pseudonym of Hugo Brandt Corstius) constructed lists of 5-, 6-, 7-, 8- and 9-letter Dutch words in which the end of one word was the start of the next: for example, query, yapok, knoop, ... zamac, clash. Each letter of the Dutch alphabet was used once in a word-join. By rearranging the alphabet to accommodate rare starts and endings, Battus created strings using every letter.

A slightly more challenging (but more elegant) requirement: join the ends of the string to form a ring. This article exhibits English-language rings for words of length three (the shortest possible) based on the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary, Third Edition, and words of length eight (the longest possible), based on Webster's Second or Third Unabridged. Words ending in Q or J are especially hard to find; there are only five of the former and sixteen of the latter listed in the Air Force Normal and Reverse English word list based on Webster's Second. A larger collection of Q-words can be found in "Must You Join the Queue?" in the May 1976 Word Ways, and J-words in Dan Tilque's "The End of the Word: J" in the Nov 1982 issue.

elf fez zax xis suq qua arc col lev vau ugh haj joy yak khi ion neb bid dig gum mop pro oar row
wet tie

nastaliq quincunx xylotomy Yugoslav vasework khawarij jotisaru underorb biquartz zucchini
intersow werewolf flotilla athletic compound delegate exacting goldfish highball linoleum
mosquito outstrip producer rigorous signpost taciturn

Other word rings can be constructed from rearranged alphabets. On page 180 of *Making the Alphabet Dance*, the alphabet QURGHFICKJAWNTZVOMSPYBDEX is comprised of 26 trigrams QUR, URG, RGH ... DEX, EXQ, XQU in nineteen Pocket Webster words:

QURsh bURGH thorouGHFare pathFInder FICKle loCKJAW AWNing doWNTown
chiNTZ bar miTZVah rendeZVOus VOMit broOMStick circuMSpect SPLeen PLY
moLYBDEmum inDEX EXQUisite

The corresponding tetragram solution must use words beyond Webster's Unabridged; does anyone care to try and find one?

On page 97 of *Making the Alphabet Dance*, a 26-word ladder is presented in which the last word circles back to join the first one, and each letter of the alphabet is used in a step of the ladder. Each word is found in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary.

maze faze gaze gave wave wavy waxy wary warn wain whin shin shit suit quit duit duct duce
dupe jupe juke joke jake bake bale male

Reading forward, the letter-changes are FGVWYXRNIHSTUQDCEPJKOABLMZ, and reading the word ladder in reverse, the letter-changes are BKJOUNPDCTIQSHNWARVYXVEGFZML.